



Engineer *Safety* Gram

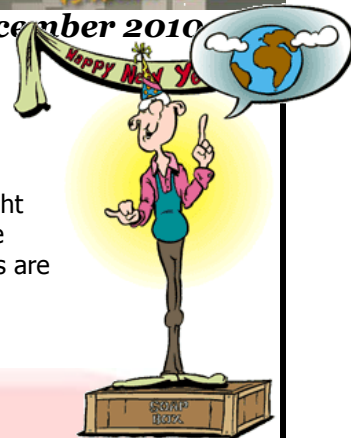
Engineering the Edge for Safety *Excellence*



U.S. ARMY
ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG

11-06

29 December 2010



New Resolutions

Every twelve months we go through the same ritual. On December 31st, when the stroke of midnight proclaims a new year, many pledge to make this year a healthier and safer year. We resolve to give up smoking, lose weight, start an exercise program, or stop drinking alcohol. New Year's resolutions are usually pie-in-the-sky goals which fail because we want to accomplish too much – too quickly.

This year consider focusing on your own and others' safety and health, resolve to:

- ◆ **Improve safety at home and at play.** Pay more attention to home and community safety, which today far surpasses the workplace in accidental death and injury rates.
- ◆ **Improve your driving habits.** Put away your cell phone and text messages while driving. Be an active participant in teens' learning to drive safely.
- ◆ **Improve your awareness about prescription drugs.** Always read the instructions on medications you are taking, realizing that failure to do so is part of what's behind a steep increase in accidental poisonings by overdose. Help kids understand the dangers of taking someone else's prescription drugs.
- ◆ **Learn first aid.** Refresh your first-aid and CPR training.
- ◆ **Improve home safety by cleaning up.** Organize your garage, removing clutter that's a mess but also dangerous.
- ◆ **Focus on fire safety.** Get in the habit of checking smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector batteries twice a year, with the time changes. Make sure you store your flammables safely.
- ◆ **Have fun** – but never drink and drive.

Also consider trying some new tactics for self-improvement.

- ◆ **Set attainable goals for the coming year.** Start with small goals and reward yourself for attaining each level. Join a support group if you are trying to lose weight, stop smoking, give up drugs or alcohol. Enjoy your successes a day at a time.
- ◆ **Like yourself.** You can't change your basic shape so focus on who you are and not how you look. If you are a happy person, you can be a safer and healthier person. Unhappiness can be a life-threatening distraction from the safe operation of vehicles, machinery, or equipment.
- ◆ **Control your blood pressure.** Learn to control unsafe blood pressure with diet, exercise, weight loss and medication as prescribed by your doctor. Visit your doctor for a complete physical before embarking on any change in your current exercise levels. For added personal safety, make sure you have regular checkups.
- ◆ **Eat for health.** Reduce your fat and cholesterol intake and increase the fiber in your diet. Avoid food with saturated fats such as whole milk, fatty red meats, lard and shortening, which can contribute to heart disease. Add whole grain breads, cereals such as oatmeal, fresh fruits, vegetables, beans and peas to your meals.
- ◆ **Be active every day.** Try climbing extra flights of stairs on your way to work. After work get off the bus several stops too early and walk the rest of the way home. Try swimming, gardening or mowing the lawn for half an hour. Wash your car or play fetch with your dog. Being in good physical condition makes you safer by giving you the ability to respond quickly to a hazard.
- ◆ **Reduce stress.** Learn to control your stress with exercise, diet and plenty of relaxation, not drugs and alcohol. After work, play softball with your kids or walk the dog. Treat yourself to a long warm bath while you listen to good music or read an interesting book. Learn to say "no" to extra commitments and "yes" to time with family.

This year, when the clock strikes midnight, resolve to make realistic New Year's resolutions. Small changes to your habits can add up to a healthier and safer New Year.

